

ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN

FOR

Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge

Recommended by: Glen R Miller Date: 3/8/00
Project Leader

Reviewed by: Thomas J Edwards Date: 4/03/2000
Division of Wildlife and Habitat Management

Reviewed by: Thomas J. Spruce Date: 5/5/00
Acting Refuge Supervisor RF-1

Reviewed by: A. Keith Taniguchi Date: 5.5.2000
for GARD

Approved by: Judy Jones Date: 5-5-00
Regional Director
Acting

ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN

WAPANOCCA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

1999

**WAPANOCCA NWR
P.O. BOX 279
TURRELL, ARKANSAS 72384**

Introduction

Station Name: Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge

Size: 5,484.17 acres

Date Established: January 24, 1961

Establishing and Acquisition Authorities: Migratory Bird Conservation Act

Purpose for which the Refuge was Established: "... for use as an inviolate sanctuary or for any other management purpose for migratory birds". 16 U.S.C. 715d (Migratory Bird Conservation Act)

Refuge Objectives and Goals:

Manage Wapanocca Lake, associated bottomland hardwoods, and cleared agricultural lands to provide needed food and habitat for wintering migratory waterfowl.

To provide habitat capable of supporting 3,700,000 duck and 1,200,00 Canada goose use days annually.

To provide habitat and artificial nesting boxes for the production of 2,500 wood ducks.

To provide environmental education annually to 3,000 students and wildlife interpretation opportunities to 28,000 visitors.

To provide compatible consumptive use opportunities for 4,000 hunter and 100,000 fishing visitors.

National Wildlife Refuge System Mission:

To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1997:

Each refuge shall be managed in a manner that helps to maintain the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the Refuge System.

Habitat Involved:

Wapanocca NWR

Main habitat types include 30 field impoundments of 190 acres, 360 acres of recent reforestation, 1,100 acres of cropland, 500 acres of floodable bottomland hardwood forests, 860 acres of upland forests (due to hydrological changes are no longer in flood zone), 610 acres of open water and 1,760 acres of cypress/willow swamp.

Private ownership

There are approximately 11,000 acres of private cropland surrounding the refuge of which the watershed flows into ditches that cross the refuge.

I. Beaver and Nutria

A. Description

Wapanocca presents ideal habitat for beaver and nutria because of the large amount of forested wetlands and ditch systems.

There were no known beaver in this section of the state when the refuge was established in 1961. The first evidence of this animal being present on the refuge was observed in early 1962. The population grew to over 250 animals by the mid 1970's. Timber stand damage and problems with maintenance of ditches and water control structures necessitated control measures which were initiated in 1976. Those problems continue today and will continue in the future since favorable conditions exist for the proliferation of this species..

The nutria, an exotic from South America, was first noticed on the refuge in 1993. The population is expanding on the refuge and damage to young cypress trees is already occurring. Damage to dikes and levees caused by nutria on the refuge is not known however problems in Louisiana are well documented. It is only a matter of time before the problem is evident on the refuge.

Neither the beaver or nutria have natural enemies in this area which would control populations.

B. Consultation and Assistance

Mike Hoy, Wildlife Services, USDA, Stuttgart; Barbara Ruby, USDA: APHIS - Wildlife Services, Little Rock ; Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

C. Control Methods Recommended and Alternatives

1. **Hunting - Almost entirely eliminates non-target species removal.**
 - a. **Public. Public hunting will be allowed during refuge hunts with hunting devices appropriate for that hunt. Few animals are expected to be taken with this method as hunters will not frequent areas used by beaver and nutria. The state requires a**

depredations permit issued by the local game warden for shooting these animals during closed seasons.

b. Refuge Personnel.

i. Night Hunting

Roads and levees adjacent water bodies would be traveled by vehicle with spotlight. Target animals would be dispatched using a .22 rimfire rifle or shotgun with #4 buckshot.

ii Daylight Hunting.

The most efficient times for this method are after winter and spring rains which swell the ditches flowing through the refuge. Beaver are frequently out on the banks or swimming in the ditches after daylight until mid-morning. These animals would be taken using a .22 rimfire rifle or shotgun with #4 buckshot.

2. Trapping - Trapping will be restricted to water sets to minimize the catch of non-target species.

a. Live Trapping - Live trapping will not be utilized as relocating the animals would only put that animal in another's territory creating problems for that animal or it would be located in an area where there would be reintroduction of a nuisance animal. Beaver presently occupy all areas of favorable habitat for them. Nutria is an exotic and should not be introduced in areas they presently are not found in as native species would suffer.

b. Kill Trapping - Conibear 330 kill traps or #4 double spring leg hold traps (drowning sets only) are to be used so animals can be dispatched quickly and as humanely as possible. Trapping of nuisance beaver and nutria is permitted the entire year for landowners by the state.

i. Public - Fur prices are too low to interest the public in trapping without additional compensation. As long as this condition exists trappers will be contracted to trap nuisance animals. If fur prices rise to economically viable trapping levels, special use permits would be issued. Trapping by the public even by contract would be the most cost efficient method of animal removal.

ii. Refuge Personnel - Trapping would be done when a nuisance animal needs to be removed and a contract trapper is not available.

3. **Toxic Baits - Toxic baits for beaver will not be used as there is no known chemical which is registered for use on beaver. Zinc phosphide is registered for use to control nutria but will also kill other rodents which might eat the bait. Canids regurgitate the poison thus removing it from their system before the toxic effect. Approval to use this chemical for nutria control will only be applied for if other control methods fail and nutria control is vital to the refuge mission.**

II. Raccoon and Opossum

A. Description

Raccoon populations have been historically high on the refuge. A hunting program was initiated in 1967 to help control the population. Even when fur prices were good and raccoon hunting popular, there have been dieoffs due to disease. Dieoffs were documented in 1972, 1973, 1982, and 1989. There may have been other disease outbreaks which went unnoticed. Disease outbreaks are more likely to occur among dense populations due to stress physically weakening individuals and the greater likelihood of encountering a sick animal and becoming infected.

Both raccoon and opossum are efficient destroyers of nesting birds. Raccoon predation on woodduck nests has been observed on the refuge.

B. Consultation and Assistance

Mike Hoy, Wildlife Services, USDA, Stuttgart, Arkansas; Barbara Ruby, Wildlife Services, USDA, Little Rock, Arkansas; Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

C. Control Methods Recommended and Alternatives

1. **Hunting - Almost entirely eliminates non-target species removal.**
 - a. **Public. Hunting of raccoon has become less popular since fur prices plummeted, however there are enough avid raccoon hunters to make this a viable control technique. Raccoon hunting was typically allowed November 1-15 yearly. In 1999, a spring hunt March 1-31 was allowed. In the year 2000 the fall hunt will be extended to end November 30th to help bring populations down to a tolerable level. Although opossum hunting is allowed in conjunction with the raccoon hunts, there is little demand for the hides or meat and few are taken by the public.**

- b. **Refuge Personnel.** Refuge personnel would not be able to devote the time needed to make this a viable program to control the overall population. This method will only be used to eliminate individual problem animals such as those interfering with wood duck banding operations. A depredation permit issued by the local game warden is required by the state to shoot animals during closed seasons.

2. Trapping

- a. **Live Trapping** - This is not a viable alternative as is labor intensive and lack of area to relocate the animals.
- b. **Kill Trapping** - This method will not be considered at this time due to the probability of taking large numbers of non-target species.

3. Toxic bait

There are no known species specific chemicals which are registered for use on these species. General toxicants would eliminate non-target species. This method will only be used to eliminate individual problem animals under conditions that will prohibit the ingestion by non-target animals.

III. Feral "Wild" hogs.

A. Description

A wild hog was first observed on the refuge July 5, 1999. They have become common along the Mississippi River levee across from the refuge. It is easy for them to traverse the two miles between the levee and the refuge. Any free-roaming hogs should be eliminated before a breeding population is established on the refuge. Hogs take a large toll on wildlife and wildlife habitat. There are no domestic hogs raised in the vicinity of the refuge so all hogs encountered will be considered "wild".

B. Consultation and Assistance

This control measure is authorized under 50 CFR 30.11 and 30.12. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission allows the taking of hogs during open hunting seasons on public lands with weapons legal for that season. They allow feral hogs to be taken on private lands at any time as long as the hunter

has legal access and the landowner's permission.

C. Control Methods Recommended and Alternatives

1. **Public Hunting.** If hogs become established on the refuge, the hunting of hogs will be allowed in conjunction with other refuge hunts.
2. **Refuge Personnel Harvest.** Hogs will be dispatched by refuge personnel whenever they are seen on the refuge.
3. **Live Trapping.** This method will be used when expedient.
4. **Other Control Measures.** Toxic baits will not be considered unless a method is developed to eliminate the possibility of taking non-target animals and then only if hunting fails to give control. The use of salted broken clay pigeons is known to be effective however should not be utilized as it is not a humane method. It clogs the digestive tract creating a slow death.

IV. Feral Cats and Dogs

A. Description

Control is authorized under 50 CFR 30.11 and 30.12. The refuge is only .25 miles from the city of Turrell. Free roaming dogs from Turrell at times form packs which roam the refuge. No longer wanted pets are sometimes dumped on the refuge. Feral dogs and cats are very destructive of wildlife thus are not compatible on the refuge and will be removed.

B. Consultation and Assistance

50 CFR 30.11 and 30.12.

Sherry Bedde, Humane Society Animal Shelter

C. Control Methods Recommended and Alternatives

1. Capture and Adoption

Former pets which can be easily captured will be captured and transported to the animal shelter in West Memphis by volunteers. The animal shelter run by the Humane Society will furnish traps and transfer cages and has agreed to take all animals brought in.

2. Kill

Animals which are too wild to be captured easily will be shot.

Animal Control Plan Environmental Assessment

for

**Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
Crittenden County
Turrell, Arkansas**

Date: January, 2000

**Preparer/Contact:
Glen R. Miller
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, Arkansas 72384**

**Phone: (870) 343-2595
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1.0 Purpose and need for Action

1.1 Introduction

An Animal Control Plan will address the disposal of animals on Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge which are detrimental to operation, management and objectives of the refuge.

1.2 Purpose of the Proposed Action

Identifies proper disposal methods of nuisance animals.

1.3 Need for the Proposed Action

Populations of certain species have increased to the extent that management of habitat and other species is being detrimentally affected.

1.4 Decision That Must be Made

The refuge manager must decide which animals have a negative impact on refuge management and objectives and propose practical means of controlling those populations.

The Regional Director must determine if the action proposed by the Refuge Manager will require preparation of a Finding of No Significant Impact or whether an Environmental Impact Statement will be needed.

1.5 Issues and Concerns

0.01 Can nuisance animals be successfully relocated?

0.02 Determining the most humane removal methods.

0.03 Minimizing removal of non-target animals.

1.6 Coordination and Consultation

A news release announcing a comment period on the draft Animal Control Plan and Environmental Assessment was sent to the following publications on November 23, 1999:

Jonesboro Sun, Jonesboro, Arkansas

The Osceola Times, Osceola, Arkansas

Evening Times, West Memphis, Arkansas

Marked Tree Tribune, Marked Tree, Arkansas

Blytheville Courier News, Blytheville, Arkansas

Wynne Progress, Wynne, Arkansas

The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, TN

Comments were to be received at the refuge office by January 17, 2000.

Three requests were received for the draft documents and were sent to:
Donnie Fraley, Turrell, Arkansas
Tom Charlier, The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, Tennessee
Joe Brougher, Marion, Arkansas
The Evening Times and The Commercial Appeal ran special articles in their newspapers in addition to the news release. See Appendices.

Copies of the draft documents were also sent to the following:
Tracy Copeland, State Clearinghouse, Little Rock, Arkansas
Kirk Harris, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, West Memphis, Arkansas
Mike Hoy, USDA, Animal Damage Control, Stuttgart, Arkansas
Sherry Bedde, West Memphis Animal Control, West Memphis

2.0 Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

2.1 Alternative 1 - No Action

The ability to manage water levels would be diminished impacting waterfowl food production and timber stand survival. Native species would be negatively impacted by habitat damage and competition from exotic and feral animals.

2.2 Alternative 2 - The Proposed Action - Control of Nuisance Animals by Lethal hunting and trapping and when practical by Nonlethal methods. Actions taken would be compatible with federal, state and local laws.

2.2.1 Lethal Control

2.2.1.1 Hunting - Beaver, nutria, raccoon and opossum hunting by the public is a cost effective method of reducing populations and is currently allowed through refuge hunting programs. Public hunting does not control populations of beaver and nutria within tolerable levels. Opportunistic shooting of problem beaver, nutria, wild hogs and uncapturable feral animals will be conducted by refuge employees. Special Hunts for wild hogs may become necessary if their populations become unmanageable otherwise.

2.2.1.2 Trapping - Contract and employee trapping of beaver and nutria using conibear and leg hold drowning set traps and hogs using box traps.

2.2.2 Non-lethal Control - Attempted capture and adoption by volunteers will first be utilized to control feral cats and dogs.

2.3 Alternative 3 - Control of Nuisance Animals by Non-lethal Means of Relocation of target animals.

Native beaver, raccoon and opossum are at carrying capacity of habitat available to them off refuge. Relocation of these species to these off refuge areas would stress the populations and the habitat they occupy. Relocation of exotic species of nutria and wild hogs would cause competition and stress on native wildlife and plant populations.

2.4 Alternative 4 - Control of Nuisance Animals by use of Toxic Baits.

There are no known species specific chemicals registered for control of target species. General toxicants would kill non-target species.

2.5 Alternative 5 - Control by Reintroduction of Natural Predators.

The only natural predators missing from today's scene are probably the puma and red wolf. Reintroduction of either is impractical due to limited size of the refuge. Red wolves range from 25-50 square miles and the puma may range up to 100 square miles. The Native Americans harvested beaver and raccoon for meat and fur. The taking of these species by modern man is addressed in Alternative 2. Introduction of natural predators of exotic animals from native habitats is environmentally unsound due to potential harm to nontarget native species.

3.0 Affected Environment

3.1 Physical Environment -

3.1.1 Facilities - Beaver and nutria burrow into levees creating maintenance and safety problems.

3.1.2 Flooding - Beaver dam up ditches causing flooding onto private agricultural lands and stressing bottomland hardwood timber on the refuge.

3.2 Land Use - Damming by beaver backs water onto private agricultural lands.

3.3 Biological Environment

3.3.1 Vegetation - Overpopulation of nutria and beaver eliminates the survival of young bald cypress trees.

Damming by beaver creates stress on and loss of bottomland hardwood timber. Rooting by wild hogs destroys native vegetation.

3.3.2 Fisheries - Fish would benefit from the damming of ditches by beaver during most years. In years of drought, fish trapped upstream of beaver dams may die due to lack of water creating high temperatures and oxygen depletion.

3.3.3 Wildlife - Animal control would be operated to eliminate target individuals. An occasional otter and muskrat both non-targeted species will be taken by kill traps. Overpopulation of raccoon and opossum and existence of feral cats, dogs and wild hogs are detrimental to nesting birds, eggs and nestlings. Reptiles, amphibians, and small mammal populations are also negatively impacted by those predators. Neotropical migrant birds dependant upon cypress stands will be effected long term if cypress recruitment is eliminated. Mast dependant species will be effected by hogs feeding on the acorns and pecans.

3.3.4 Threatened/Endangered Species - No T&E species are known to exist in this area.

3.4 Archeological and Historic Resources - These resources will not be effected by this plan. However, no control of wild hogs may lead to future ground disturbance of surface and buried artifacts.

3.5 Social

3.5.1 Human Population - The City of Turrell, approximate population of 1,000 is located .25 miles north of the refuge. Many residents of Turrell allow their dogs and cats to roam free, however few make it to the refuge and if they do quickly depart when yelled at. This will no doubt change in the near future. A purchase agreement has been signed to purchase the land between the refuge and Turrell and add it to the refuge. Unwanted pets are occasionally released on the refuge to fend for themselves.

3.5.2 Human Health/Safety - Some of the refuge roads are on levees which may develop sink holes from undermining by beaver and nutria.

3.6 Economic - The trend away from wearing furs in recent years has lead to a huge drop in the fur market. This in part is the reason for the large beaver population in this area. It is no longer economically feasible to trap them to profit from their furs. Paying trappers to take problem animals will be one means of controlling the populations.

- 3.7 Aesthetics - Picturesque landscapes would be damaged by the proliferation of uncontrolled hog populations. High raccoon populations in the past has resulted in noticeable mortality from disease. The carcasses of numbers of animals would be disturbing to some members of the visiting public. This would also be true in the case of beaver and nutria control by shooting. Animals shot in the waters may be unretrievable thus will float until well into the decomposition process.

4.0 Environmental Consequences

4.1 Alternative 1 - No Action

4.1.1 Water quality - Some soil erosion into water bodies could be expected from soil disturbance by the rooting of hogs.

4.1.2 Soils - See 4.1.1

4.1.3 Vegetation - Bottomland hardwood timber would be stressed due to summer flooding resulting from damming activities of beaver. Understory in bottomland timber may be eliminated due to frequent flooding because of beaver dams. Vegetation would be uprooted by rooting of hogs. Cypress trees would be damaged and small cypress trees destroyed by gnawing of nutria.

4.1.4 Wildlife Resources - Forest dwelling wildlife would suffer from the loss of trees caused by beaver and nutria. Ground and low shrub nesting wildlife would be unfavorably impacted by high populations of raccoon, opossum, hogs, and feral dogs and cats. Raccoon populations would periodically peak and then crash as disease would quickly spread through an overabundant population.

4.1.5 Endangered and threatened species - There are no listed species known to reside on the refuge.

4.1.6 Social/Economic - Flooding onto private cropland would provide financial hardship to landowners. Future harvestable timber would be lost.

4.2 Alternative 2 - Proposed Action - Hunting and trapping nuisance animals.

4.2.1 Water quality - Overall water quality would not deteriorate as sediment deposit into water bodies would be minimized with the elimination of soil disturbance by hogs. Localized water areas would temporarily be impacted by decaying carcasses of animals killed and unretrieved in those waters.

4.2.2 Soils - no impact.

4.2.3 Vegetation - Bottomland timber associated vegetation and bald cypress trees/regeneration would be protected.

4.2.4 Wildlife Resources - Healthy populations of raccoon would be maintained . Ground and low shrub nesting wildlife would have higher recruitment rates. Species dependent upon bottomland hardwood timber and cypress trees would not diminish as those habitats would be protected. Individual animals targeted for control would be eliminated.

4.2.5 Endangered and threatened Species - There are no listed species known to reside on the refuge.

4.2.6 Social/Economic - Hunting is a sport enjoyed by many people. There are also people completely opposed to hunting and trapping activities.

4.3 Alternative 3 - Control by Relocation

4.3.1 Water Quality - See Section 4.2.1

4.3.2 Soils - No impact

4.3.3 Vegetation - See Section 4.2.3

4.3.4 Wildlife Resources - Relocation to other areas would stress the existing populations and habitat occupied upsetting the ecosystem of that area. Loss of many of the relocated animals and/nonresident animals would be expected due to mortality from conflict and disease.

4.3.5 Endangered and Threatened Species - Relocation to other areas may create stress for listed species that may dwell in that habitat.

4.3.6 Social/Economic - Property owners willing to accept and keep the nuisance animals would be difficult if not impossible to find.

4.4 Alternative 4 - Control by Toxic Baits

4.4.1 Water quality - Toxins may leak into the water killing non-target aquatic species.

4.4.2 Soils - Toxins may leak into the soils killing soil organisms.

4.4.3 Vegetation - See Section 4.2.3

4.4.4 Wildlife Resources - Many non-target animals would be expected to be killed by ingesting the toxicants. Secondary poisoning may result from scavengers feeding on carcasses of animal killed by toxicants.

4.4.5 Endangered and Threatened Species - Primary and secondary poisoning may result from migrating listed species feeding on baits and carcasses.

4.4.6 Social/Economic - The areas of the refuge where baits are placed would require closure to the visiting public.

4.5 Alternative 5 - Control by Reintroduction of Natural Predators.

4.5.1 Water Quality - No impact.

4.5.2 Soils - No impact.

4.5.3 Vegetation - No impact.

4.5.4 Wildlife Resources - Reintroduction of puma and red wolf would have little effect on target species. The reintroduced predators would soon leave the refuge and become problems for domestic animals off-refuge making it necessary to destroy the predators. Introduction of natural predators of exotic animals from native habitats would harm nontarget native specie populations.

4.5.5 Endangered and Threatened Species - Reintroduction may create stress for listed species beyond the boundaries of the refuge.

4.5.6 Social/Economic - Reintroduction of large carnivores would not be welcomed by residents of this area since the predators would be expected to kill domestic animals which would be easy prey for them. Livestock owners would lose economically and pet owners would experience emotional trauma from the loss of their pets.

5.0 List of Preparers

This environmental assessment was prepared by Glen R. Miller, Refuge Manager, Wapanocca NWR, P.O. Box 279, Turrell, Arkansas 72384.

6.0 Literature Cited/Consulted
1999-2000 Arkansas Hunting Regulations
The Wild Mammals of Missouri
Endangered and Threatened Species of the Southeastern United States.

7.0 Appendices
7.1 News Release for Public Comment Period
7.2 News Paper Articles
7.3 Requests for Review
7.4 Comments Received



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
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November 23, 1999

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMENT PERIOD OPEN FOR ANIMAL CONTROL AT WAPANOCCA REFUGE

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces the opening of the comment period regarding developing a final plan and environmental assessment for the control of certain animals on Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) near Turrell, Arkansas.

In order to meet objectives and goals of the refuge and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, varying levels of control are needed on some native and exotic species. The Animal Control Plan will address the need for and best ways of accomplishing the control.

Comments on the plan and Environmental Assessment are requested by January 17, 2000 and should be sent to Wapanocca NWR. Copies of the draft documents are available at the refuge. Send correspondence to Wapanocca NWR, P.O. Box 279, Turrell, AR 72384.

Appendix 7.2

Newspaper Articles

EVENING

TIMES

Published for and About Crittenden County Plus Eastern Arkansas

COMMUNITY

Wonder receives flag
Rep. Steele donates Capitol

STATE

New Madrid fault
Scientists concerned about

SPORTS

Turrell Invitational
Tournament highlights/score

Refuge taking comments for animal control program

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces the opening of the comment period regarding developing a final plan and environment assessment for the control of certain animals on Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) near Turrell.

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EVENING

TIMES

Published for and About Crittenden County Plus Eastern Arkansas

COMMUNITY

Orphan train memories
Historical talk at WM Librar

STATE

NTSB in Memphis
Amphibious boats safety on

SPORTS

Basketball
Local high school teams. Pa

Refuge manager says animal overpopulation a problem at Wapanocca

By Jennifer Swain
Evening Times Staff Writer

Glen Miller wants everyone with an interest in the environment and animal control to answer the call for comments on how to develop a final plan and environ-

mental assessment for the Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge.

Located near Turrell, Wapanocca is home to a wide variety of wildlife that lives in wetlands and the surrounding areas. Duck and geese in season, deer, raccoon and beaver are just some of the animals that make their homes in the wildlife refuge. Miller is the Fish and Wildlife Service agent in charge of the refuge.

According to Miller, maintaining the refuge's ecological balance includes controlling the animal population. The United States Department of the Interior release stated that "in order to meet objectives and goals

See WAPANOCCA on Page 2

Continued from Page 1

of the refuge and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, varying levels of animal control are needed on some native and exotic species."

Miller said, "We have certain animals out here that become too numerous and cause damage, so we have to control them."

Miller said options include limited hunting and trapping, some open to the public. He also said that other suggestions would be welcome, "in case there is something we have overlooked in our study."

Problems with native species occur, as well as those with feral domesticated pets and exotic species. Beaver and raccoon populations have burgeoned, especially as larger predators have been hunted out over the past century. Wolves and larger native wildcats are never seen anymore in Crittenden County, and the coyote population, while present, lacks sufficient numbers to aid in beaver and raccoon control.

One current problem is feral cats and dogs, which are often house pets an owner has decided he or she does not want. Miller said that people drop off their pets in the country, and some of those pets end up on the wildlife refuge. Obviously, they are not "native" species to the ecosystem.

Miller said, "We're hoping that the Humane Society will attempt to capture those that are able to be

caught. As for the others that have gotten too wild, well, other solutions will have to be sought."

Another problem for the refuge is exotic animals such as nutria and wild hogs. "We're trying to explore the best method to remove them," said Miller. "As the nutria are very numerous, obviously we cannot trap or kill them all. We just need to control their numbers."

Nutria are South American rodents that have become a major nuisance in Louisiana and that have migrated to Arkansas. According to Miller, nutria do structural damage to levees and dikes, as well as displacing native species.

Miller said, "One option is going to open trapping for nutria, but since fur fees are so low... the only other option is to pay some trapper to come in and do it."

Wild hogs pose the other

problem. "Wild hogs are very destructive to pretty much everything. They wreak a lot of havoc on the system here," Miller said.

Comments on the plan and Environmental Assessment are requested by January 17, 2000, and should be sent to Miller at Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge. Copies of the draft documents of the plan as it stands are available at the refuge.

Correspondence should be sent to Wapanocca NWR, P.O. Box 279, Turrell, AR 72384.

Comments and the final plan incorporating their suggestions will be sent on to the regional director for the Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta for approval.

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

346, 8 Sections

Memphis, Tennessee, Sunday, December 12, 1999

FINAL

Full wildlife refuge verging on habitat of insanity

By Tom Charlier
The Commercial Appeal

TURRELL, Ark. — So many animals are running rampant here — burrowing, snorting and chewing up the place — you'd think Glen R. Miller ran a wildlife refuge.

Well, OK, he does. But as far as Miller is concerned, enough is enough.

Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge, barely 20 miles northwest of downtown Memphis, has a definite critter problem, says Miller, its manager.

If beavers aren't damming drainage ditches and water-control structures, then raccoons are plundering bird nests. South American nutria are gnawing on cypress seedlings, and wild hogs are starting to invade. There's even the occasional problem of domestic pets' being dropped off.

The troubles have gotten serious enough that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing an animal control program for certain species at the refuge. It calls for expanded hunting, coupled with the trapping and shooting of nuisance spe-

cies.

The reason for the plan is simple, Miller says. "Something needs to be done."

Animal problems are not unheard of at refuges, which are set up to provide habitat for declining or important species. Animals and plants that are exotic or have become too abundant can damage the habitat.

In those cases, letting nature take its course — especially when there are no predators left — isn't an option, said Tom MacKenzie, spokesman for the Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta.

"The problem is, when these critters come in, often they're real hardy and very effective. ... And it's very difficult to combat them," MacKenzie said. "You have to have natural predators, and if they don't exist, we have to take the place of them."

Wapanocca contains about 5,500 acres of bottom land forest, fields, cypress swamp and open water. A former hunting club, it was opened in 1961 with the mission of providing habitat for migrating birds and

Please see REFUGE, Page A4



By Lance Murphey

A swelling population of South American nutria is threatening vegetation at the Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge near Turrell, Ark. Manager Glen Miller has begun "harvesting" them.

From Page A1

Refuge

waterfowl.

The problems triggering the control program involve animals that either didn't exist on the refuge or had small populations when the facility was established.

Beavers, for instance, hadn't even been documented on the refuge 38 years ago. Now, after years of low trapping harvests because of poor market demand for fur, the animals have proliferated at Wapanocca and across the United States.

During a morning tour of the refuge, Miller points out numerous beaver dams and obstructions.

One blocks the channel leading from the boat ramp into Wapanocca Lake. Another constricts a water-control structure used to regulate impoundments for ducks, while others obstruct ditches that drain surrounding cropland.

There are no cost-effective means of removing the beaver dams and keeping them clear, he said. Even explosives have failed to do the job.

"It's a constant problem in the summer. Beaver will come in overnight and plug it solid," Miller said, referring to an obstructed water-control structure.

Another problem animal is a South American rodent. Nutria were introduced more than 50 years ago in Louisiana and raised for their fur. They also were valued for their ability to control aquatic vegetation.

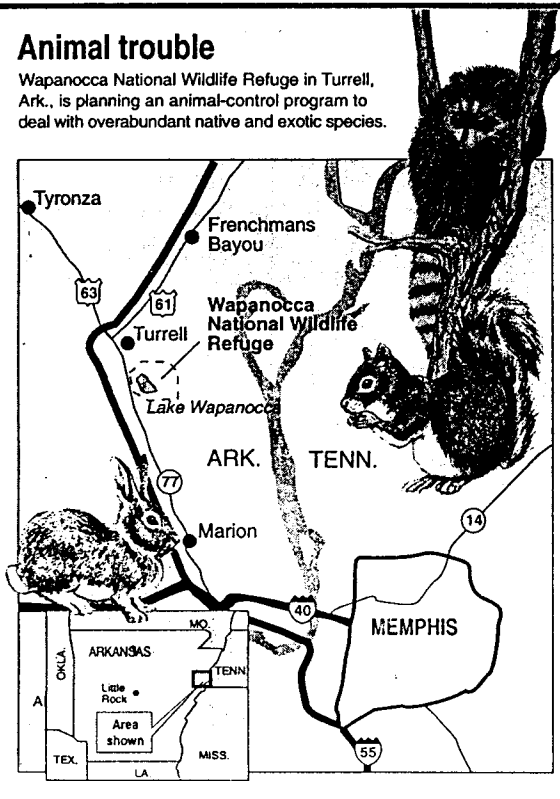
But as a result of hurricanes, relocation and natural migration, nutria have spread inland from coastal regions. They initially were detected on Wapanocca in 1993.

The animals, which resemble water rats, are extremely destructive to marshes and forests. In Louisiana, they've denuded swamps, aggravated erosion problems and thwarted reforestation efforts by literally eating themselves out of an ecosystem.

Nutria populations can increase above and beyond what

Animal trouble

Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge in Turrell, Ark., is planning an animal-control program to deal with overabundant native and exotic species.



By Penny Wolfe

biologists call the carrying capacity of an ecosystem," said Noel Kinler, research biologist with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Lori Johnson-Randall, a biologist at the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wetlands Research Center in Lafayette, La., said nutria, unlike many other animals, kill the vegetation on which they graze.

"Imagine a grass shoot. Instead of eating from the top,

they'll clip it off at the base and leave the rest of it. In the wintertime, they dig up the roots," Johnson-Randall said.

"They love cypress seedlings."

Nutria also are notorious burrowers, capable of damaging dikes and levees. In Louisiana, levee boards have hired sharpshooters to control them.

Kinler and other experts said it's uncertain how nutria reached Arkansas, but it might

have been through natural migration. Populations became so dense in coastal marshes that the habitat became depleted and animals moved on.

"As populations grew, they were probably expanding out through the watercourses," Kinler said.

Miller said the discovery of nutria at Wapanocca six years ago came as a surprise.

"We saw the first one — it was road kill. We didn't even know we had them," he said.

If exploding populations of beaver and nutria have caused problems in water, soaring numbers of raccoons are wreaking mayhem on land.

Miller said the refuge abounds with raccoons, especially young ones. They rob eggs of important migratory songbird species and other creatures.

"Their populations are so high, they destroy a lot of nests," he said. "I don't see how we have any turtles at all because they (raccoons) dig up the nests."

Wild hogs, an exotic species that escaped from a breeder, have roamed the Mississippi River levee in recent years and have been sighted on the eastern edge of the refuge. The hogs could trample habitat and eat up the acorns and corn on which other animals depend, Miller said.

The animal control plan outlines a preferred alternative calling for lethal and nonlethal means of dealing with nuisance animals. It includes some measures already being used, such as the "opportunistic shooting" of problem beavers

and nutria by refuge personnel. Trapping also will be used.

Expanded hunting should help control raccoon populations, according to the plan. Nonlethal methods, such as adoption, can be employed when possible on animals such as dogs and cats left on the refuge.

The plan is open to public review through Jan. 17. Comments should be sent to the refuge at P.O. Box 279, Turrell, Ark. 72384.

To reach reporter Tom Charlier, call 529-2572 or E-mail charlier@gomemphis.com

Appendix 7.3
Requests for Review



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, AR 72384
(870)343-2595
FAX: (870)343-2416



November 23, 1999

Sherry Bedde
West Memphis Animal Control
100 Court Street
West Memphis, AR 72301

Dear Ms. Bedde:

Attached are drafts of an Animal Control Plan and related Environmental Assessment. In IV.C.1. of the Animal Control Plan I addressed the capture of pets. Is the information still current and correct?

Please feel free to comment on the other sections as well. If you have any comments, I need to have them by January 17, 2000.

Sincerely,

Glen R. Miller
Refuge Manager



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, AR 72384
(870)343-2595
FAX: (870)343-2416



November 23, 1999

Mike Hoy, District Supervisor
USDA, Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service
Animal Damage Control
P.O. Box 570
Stuttgart, AR 72160

Dear Mr. Hoy:

Attached are drafts of an Animal Control Plan and related Environmental Assessment for Wapanocca NWR.

I would appreciate it if you could take time to review the information as to its correctness. If you have any other ideas, I would be glad to have them.

I need to have any comments you might have back to me by January 17, 2000.

Sincerely,

Glen R. Miller
Refuge Manager



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, AR 72384
(870)343-2595
FAX: (870)343-2416



November 23, 1999

Kirk Harris, Conservation Officer
220 Anna Lane
West Memphis, AR 72301

Dear Kirk:

Attached are drafts of an Animal Control Plan and related Environmental Assessment for Wapanocca NWR.

I want to be in harmony with State regulations as much as possible. I would appreciate if you could review the material for correctness. Please feel free to make any suggested improvements.

If you have any comments, I need to have them by January 17, 2000.

Sincerely,

Glen R., Miller
Refuge Manager



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, AR 72384
(870)343-2595
FAX: (870)343-2416



November 23, 1999

Tracy L. Copeland
Manager, State Clearinghouse
Office of Intergovernmental Services
Department of Finance and Administration
1515 W. 7th St., Room 412
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203

Dear Manager Copeland:

Executive Order 12372 asked that all federal agencies submit NEPA compliance documents to State clearinghouses for review as part of the public review.

Attached is a draft Environmental Assessment for an Animal Control Plan proposed for Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge. Please send copies to the responsible parties.

Sincerely,

Glen R. Miller
Refuge Manager

Appendix 7.4

Comments Received

USDA/ WILDLIFE SERVICES

P.O. BOX 570
STUTTGART, AR 72160

Phone: 870/673-1121
FAX: 870/672-7391
email: Michael.D.Hoy@USDA.GOV

Memorandum

*To: Glen R. Miller
Refuge Manager
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, AR 73284*

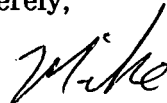
*From: Michael D. Hoy
District Supervisor*

Date: Tuesday, January 4, 2000

Subject: Draft Animal Control Plan

I have reviewed the animal control sections of the draft subject plan and have found no significant problems with context. The recommended control methods are realistic and alternatives well explained. Let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Andrew N. Gipson

December 15, 1999

Mr. Glen Miller
Wapanocca Wildlife Refuge
P. O. Box 279
Turrell, Arkansas 72384

Dear Mr. Miller:

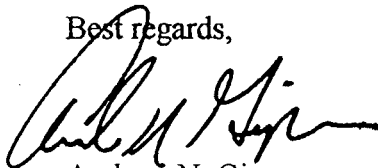
I am writing as a follow up to our telephone conversation of December 13, 1999 regarding an article in the Memphis paper about the refuge.

Specifically, I addressed with you my desire to hunt the wild hogs that are mentioned in the article. As I indicated during our conversation, the hunting of wild hogs would require the use of a large caliber rifle or a twelve gauge shotgun loaded with rifle slug rounds. The use of smaller weapons would, in my opinion, result in non-fatal wounds to the animals.

You suggested that at present, weapons such as those are prohibited in the refuge, but if the hogs continue to be a problem, this rule might be modified. If this happens, I would like to make application to be allowed to hunt the hogs in accordance with whatever rules and regulations that may be applicable.

I thank you for conversing with me on the phone, and I would certainly appreciate it if you would please keep me informed of any future developments.

Best regards,



Andrew N. Gipson

To, whom It May Concern

12/12/99

Hi my name is Megan Holsapfel. I am doing a school project on "Disasters" and I picked your article.

I am strong animal lover owning 2 dogs, 1 bird, ton of fish, and 1 hamster, also riding horse with my best friend Courtney Allison. When reading your article it really hurt me when all these animals are suffering and even dieing. I want to be more involved in this problem, is there anything I can do to help? Well if there is write me. Thanxs

Your Friend,
Megan Holsapfel

P.S write back thanxs

address
3855 North Bluff Point
Bartlett, TN. 38135

Phone #
(901) 382-1194

3125 Woodland Pine Dr.
Lakeland, TN 38002

December 13, 1999

Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, Arkansas 72384

Dear Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge,

This letter is in response to the article written in The Commercial Appeal on Dec. 12, 1999, *Full wildlife refuge verging on habitat of insanity*. Let me first say that as avid outdoor lovers, we certainly understand the need for an animal control program in order to ensure the survival of certain species. However, it is our opinion that "opportunistic" shooting and lethal methods of controlling these nuisance animals are not the best long-term solution. Keeping men "on the look-out" with gun (and/or injection) in hand may be the best short-term fix, but will certainly not contribute to a long-term solution. By maintaining this strategy, you could be looking at an ongoing battle for many years to come. As an alternative solution is to re-introduce natural predators back into the area, keeping the ecosystem in its most "natural" state. Afterall, isn't that your objective? Yes, it may be a bit more costly upfront, but these predators can continue to control nuisance animal populations in the years to come, and in your absence. Overall, we feel that it would be a good investment for the state of Arkansas..."The Natural State."

Thank you,

Mr. and Mrs. Chris Douglass

Mr. and Mrs. Chris Douglass



OFFICE OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES
PHONE (501) 682-1074
FAX (501) 682-5206

STATE OF ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
P. O. BOX 3278
LITTLE ROCK - 72203

January 21, 2000

Mr. Glen R. Miller
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 279
Turrell, Arkansas 72384

RE: Draft Environmental Assessment – Animal Control Plan for Wapanocca National Wildlife
Refuge–Crittenden County–Turrell, Arkansas

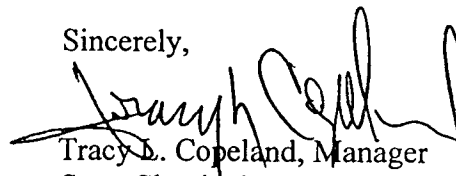
Dear Mr. Miller:

The State Clearinghouse has received the above Document pursuant to the Arkansas Project Notification and Review System.

To carry out the review and comment process, this document was forwarded to members of the Arkansas Technical Review Committee. Resulting comments received from the Technical Review Committee which represents the position of the State of Arkansas are attached.

The State Clearinghouse wishes to thank you for your cooperation with the Arkansas Project Notification and Review System.

Sincerely,


Tracy L. Copeland, Manager
State Clearinghouse

TLC/msm
Enclosure
cc: Randy Young, AS&WCC



Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission

J. Randy Young, P.E.
Executive Director

101 EAST CAPITOL
SUITE 350
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201

PHONE 501-682-1611
FAX 501-682-3991

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Tracy Copeland
Manager, State Clearinghouse

FROM: J. Randy Young, P.E.
Chairman, Technical Review Committee

SUBJECT: Draft Environmental Assessment – Animal Control plan for Wapanocca National
Wildlife Refuge – Crittenden County – Turrell, Arkansas

DATE: January 6, 2000

Members of the Technical Review Committee have reviewed the above referenced project; which is to identify proper disposal methods of nuisance animals. An animal control plan will address the disposal of animals which are detrimental to operation, management and objectives of the refuge. The Committee supports this project. Agency comments are included for your review.

The opportunity to comment is appreciated.

JRY/ddavis
Enclosures
cc: Members of the Technical Review Committee

RECEIVED

JAN 21 2000

INTERGOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge

An Equal Opportunity Employer



OFFICE OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES
PHONE (501) 682-1074
FAX (501) 682-5208

STATE OF ARKANSAS

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

P O BOX 3273
LITTLE ROCK - 72203

10/31

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Technical Review Committee Members

FROM: Tracy L. Copeland, *TRC* Manager - State Clearinghouse

DATE: November 29, 1999

SUBJECT: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT-ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN FOR WAPANOCCA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - CRITTENDEN COUNTY - TURRELL, ARKANSAS

Please review the above stated document under provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Arkansas Project Notification and Review System.

Your comments should be returned by ^{DECEMBER 17, 1999} to - Mr. Randy Young, Chairman, Technical Review Committee, 101 E Capitol, Suite 350, Little Rock, Arkansas 72203.

If we have no reply within that time we will assume you have no comments and will proceed with the sign-off.

NOTE: It is imperative that your response be in to the ASWCC office by the date requested. Should your agency anticipate having a response which will be delayed beyond the stated deadline for comments, please contact Ms. Debbie Davis of the ASWCC at 682-1611 or The State Clearinghouse Office.

<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Support (Comments Attached)
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments Attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Support with Following Conditions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Degradation Certification Issues (Applies to PC&E Only)

Signature R Colbert Agency ASWCC Date 12/20/99



OFFICE OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES
PHONE (501) 682-1074
FAX (501) 682-8006

STATE OF ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
P O BOX 3273
LITTLE ROCK - 72203

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: All Technical Review Committee Members

FROM: Tracy L. Copeland, ^{TLC} Manager - State Clearinghouse

DATE: November 29, 1999

SUBJECT: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT-ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN FOR WAPANOCCA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - CRITTENDEN COUNTY - TURRELL, ARKANSAS

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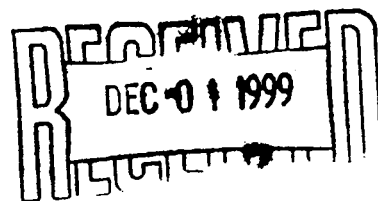
<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Support (Comments Attached)
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments Attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Support with Following Conditions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Degradation Certification Issues (Applies to PC&E Only)

Signature John A. Shaw Agency AH7D Date 12/2/99



OFFICE OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES
PHONE (501) 682-1074
FAX (501) 682-2205

STATE OF ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
P O BOX 3278
LITTLE ROCK - 72203



MEMORANDUM

TO: All Technical Review Committee Members

FROM: Tracy L. Copeland, ^{TLC} Manager - State Clearinghouse

DATE: November 29, 1999

SUBJECT: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT-ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN FOR WAPANOCCA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - CRITTENDEN COUNTY - TURRELL, ARKANSAS

Please review the above stated document under provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Arkansas Project Notification and Review System.

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☐ Support

☐ Do Not Support (Comments Attached)

☐ Comments Attached

☐ Support with Following Conditions

☒ No Comments

☐ Non-Degradation Certification Issues
(Applies to PC&E Only)

Signature Steve Brown

Agency ADEQ

Date 2 DEC 99



OFFICE OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES
PHONE (501) 682-1074
FAX (501) 682-8006

STATE OF ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
P O BOX 3273
LITTLE ROCK - 72203

RECEIVED

NOV 29 1999

NOV 29 1999

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Technical Review Committee Members

FROM: Tracy L. Copeland, Manager - State Clearinghouse

DATE: November 29, 1999

SUBJECT: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT-ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN FOR WAPANOCCA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - CRITTENDEN COUNTY - TURRELL, ARKANSAS

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<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Support (Comments Attached)
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments Attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Support with Following Conditions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Degradation Certification Issues (Applies to PC&E Only)

Signature Alford Drinkwater Agency Economic Development Date 12-2-99



OFFICE OF
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES
PHONE (501) 682-1074
FAX (501) 682-5205

STATE OF ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
P O BOX 3273
LITTLE ROCK - 72203

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Technical Review Committee Members

FROM: Tracy L. Copeland, ^{TLC} Manager - State Clearinghouse

DATE: November 29, 1999

SUBJECT: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT-ANIMAL CONTROL PLAN FOR WAPANOCCA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE - CRITTENDEN COUNTY - TURRELL, ARKANSAS

Please review the above stated document under provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Arkansas Project Notification and Review System.

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<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Support (Comments Attached)
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments Attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Support with Following Conditions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Degradation Certification Issues (Applies to PC&E Only)

Signature Will V. Burd Agency Ark. Geol. Comm Date 12-2-99

Kirk Harris - Arkansas Game & Fish Commission Wildlife Officer.
Personal communication January 26, 2000.

He was told that placing salted broken clay pigeons in an area frequented by wild hogs is an effective control. The hogs will consume the clay pigeons binding up their digestive system.

REGION 4

INTRA-SERVICE SECTION 7 BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION FORM

[Note: This form provides the outline of information needed for intra-Service consultation. If additional space is needed, attach additional sheets, or set up this form to accommodate your responses.]

Originating Person: Glen R. Miller, Refuge Manager

Telephone Number: 870-343-2595

E-Mail: Glen_Miller@FWS.Gov

Date: February 25, 2000

PROJECT NAME (Grant Title/Number): Animal Control on Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge

I. Service Program:

☐ Ecological Services

☐ Federal Aid

☐ Clean Vessel Act

☐ Coastal Wetlands

☐ Endangered Species Section 6

☐ Partners for Fish and Wildlife

☐ Sport Fish Restoration

☐ Wildlife Restoration

☐ Fisheries

☒ Refuges/Wildlife

II. State/Agency: Arkansas, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

III. Station Name: Wapanocca NWR

IV. Description of Proposed Action (attach additional pages as needed):

Eliminate Nuisance Animals:

Raccoon/opposum - shooting, public hunting

Beaver - trapping, shooting

Nutria - trapping, shooting

Hogs - shooting, public hunting

Feral cats/dogs - capture and removal, shooting

V. Pertinent Species and Habitat:

A. Include species/habitat occurrence map: See Refuge Map.

B. Complete the following table:

SPECIES/CRITICAL HABITAT	STATUS ¹
Least Tern	E

¹STATUS: E=endangered, T=threatened, PE=proposed endangered, PT=proposed threatened, CH=critical habitat, PCH=proposed critical habitat, C=candidate species

VI. Location (attach map):

- A. **Ecoregion Number and Name:** 27, Lower Mississippi River
- B. **County and State:** Crittenden County, Arkansas
- C. **Section, township, and range (or latitude and longitude):**
Section 27,28,33,34,35,T9N,R8E; Section 1,2,3,4,9,10,11,12,T8N,R8E
- D. **Distance (miles) and direction to nearest town:**
0-5 miles SE of Turrell, Arkansas
- E. **Species/habitat occurrence:**
See Map for habitat:
Beaver and nutria found in aquatic habitat.
Raccoon, opossum, hogs, feral cats and dogs found in upland areas.
Least tern found foraging over aquatic vegetation in lake during summer months.

VII. Determination of Effects:

- A. Explanation of effects of the action on species and critical habitats in item V.
B (attach additional pages as needed):**

SPECIES/ CRITICAL HABITAT	IMPACTS TO SPECIES/CRITICAL HABITAT
Least Tern	Control of nutria will keep aquatic plants from
	being destroyed thus harboring insects for terns to
	feed on.
	Other animal control does not effect terns or their
	habitat.

- B. Explanation of actions to be implemented to reduce adverse effects:**

SPECIES/ CRITICAL HABITAT	ACTIONS TO MITIGATE/MINIMIZE IMPACTS
Least Tern	There will be no negative impacts by the proposed
	action.

VIII. Effect Determination and Response Requested:

SPECIES/ CRITICAL HABITAT	DETERMINATION ¹			RESPONSE ¹ REQUESTED
	NE	NA	AA	
Least Tern		X		

DETERMINATION/RESPONSE REQUESTED:

NE = no effect. This determination is appropriate when the proposed action will not directly, indirectly, or cumulatively impact, either positively or negatively, any listed, proposed, candidate species or designated/proposed critical habitat. Response Requested is optional but a "Concurrence" is recommended for a complete Administrative Record.

NA = not likely to adversely affect. This determination is appropriate when the proposed action is not likely to adversely impact any listed, proposed, candidate species or designated/proposed critical habitat or there may be beneficial effects to these resources. Response Requested is a "Concurrence".

AA = likely to adversely affect. This determination is appropriate when the proposed action is likely to adversely impact any listed, proposed, candidate species or designated/proposed critical habitat. Response Requested for listed species is "Formal Consultation". Response Requested for proposed or candidate species is "Conference".

Glen R Miller
signature (originating station)

2/25/00
date

Refuge Manager
title

IX. Reviewing Ecological Services Office Evaluation:

A. Concurrence X Nonconcurrence _____

B. Formal consultation required _____

C. Conference required _____

D. Informal conference required _____

E. Remarks (attach additional pages as needed):

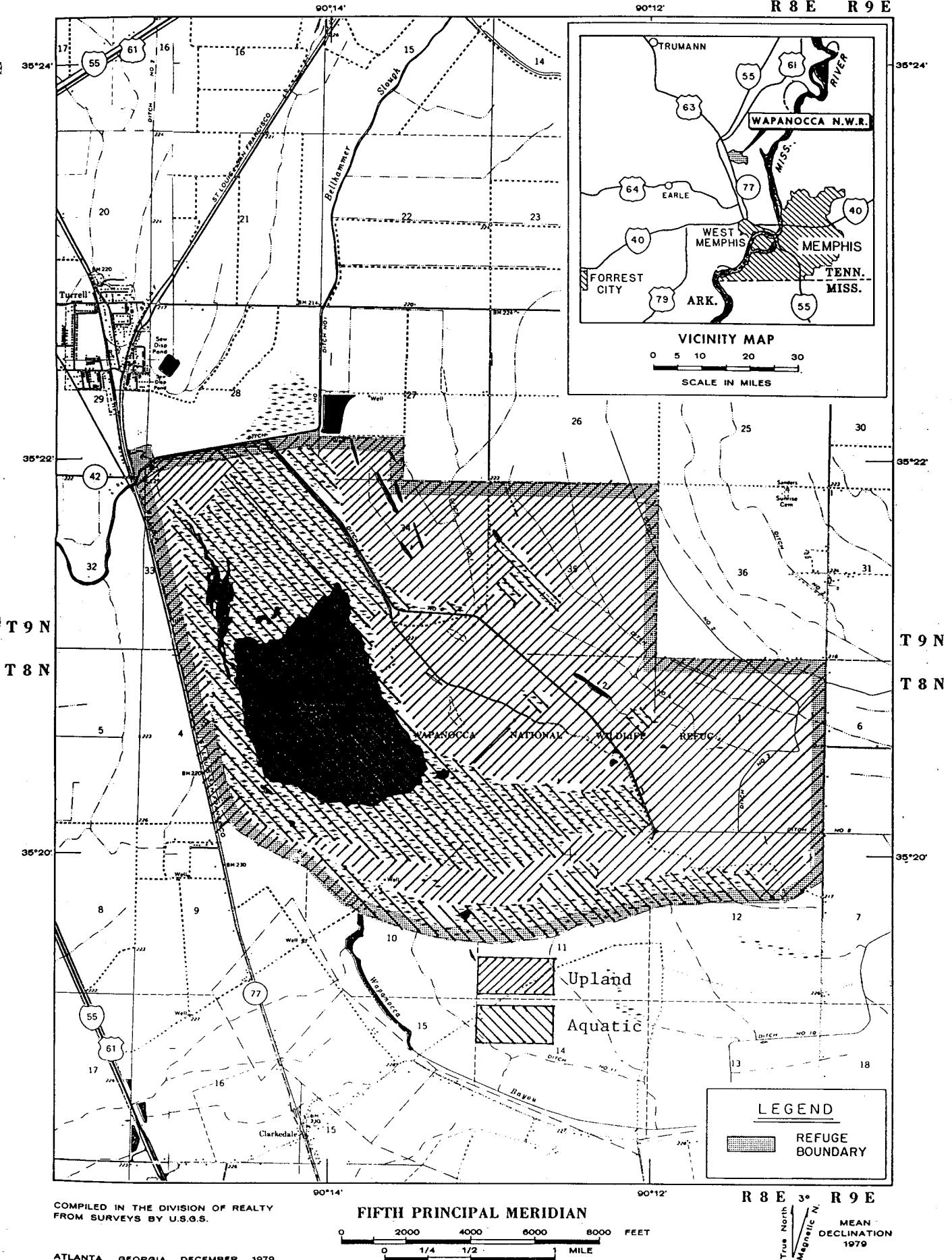
Margaret Harney 3/10/00
signature date
Acting Field Supervisor
title office

WAPANOCCA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CRITTENDEN COUNTY, ARKANSAS

UNITED STATES
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
R 8 E R 9 E



COMPILED IN THE DIVISION OF REALTY
FROM SURVEYS BY U.S.G.S.

FIFTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN

R 8 E 3° R 9 E

ATLANTA, GEORGIA DECEMBER, 1979

4R ARK 551 403

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION STATEMENT

Within the spirit and intent of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy act (NEPA), and other statutes, orders, and policies that protect fish and wildlife resources, I have established the following administrative record and determined that the action on controlling nuisance animals on Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge:

Check one:

- _____ is a categorical exclusion as provided by 516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1. No further NEPA documentation will therefore be made.
- X is found not to have significant environmental effects as determined by the attached environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.
- _____ is found to have significant effects and, therefore, further consideration of this action will require a notice of intent to be published in the Federal Register announcing the decision to prepare an EIS.
- _____ is not approved because of unacceptable environmental damage, or violation of Fish and Wildlife Service mandates, policy, regulations, or procedures.
- _____ is an emergency action within the context of 40 CRF 1 506.1 1. Only those actions necessary to control the immediate impacts of the emergency will be taken. Other related actions remain subject to NEPA review.

Other supporting documents

Signature Approval:

<u>Glen R Miller</u>	<u>2/3/00</u>	<u>Thomas J. Sprua</u>	<u>5/5/00</u>
Originator	Date	Refuge Supervisor RF-1	Date
<u>A Keith Taniguchi</u>	<u>5.5.2000</u>	<u>Bruce Bell</u>	<u>5/5/00</u>
for GARD - Area I	Date	Regional Environmental	Date
		Coordinator	
<u>Judy Jones</u>	<u>5-5-00</u>		
Regional Director	Date		

Acting

COMPATIBILITY DETERMINATION

Use: Public hunting of raccoon, opossum, beaver, nutria, and wild hogs.

Refuge Name: Wapanocca NWR

Establishing and Acquisition Authorities: Migratory Bird Conservation Act.

Refuge Purposes: "... for use as an inviolate sanctuary or for any other management purpose for migratory birds". 16 U.S.C. 715d (Migratory Bird Conservation Act)

Refuge System Mission: To administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generation of Americans.

Description of Use: Recreational public hunting of raccoon, opossum, beaver, nutria, and wild hogs.

Anticipated Impacts of the Use: Positive impacts will result in the protecting of habitat and other wildlife from destruction. Minor negative impacts are anticipated with the temporary disturbance to other wildlife due to presence of hunting dogs and hunters.

Availability of Resources: N/A

Stipulations Necessary to Ensure Compatibility: None.

Determination: Hunting will have a positive effect on refuge habitat and consequently desirable wildlife. See Environmental Assessment.

This use has been found to be compatible.

Justification: Public hunting will be used as a part of the wildlife and habitat management programs of the refuge thus is in line with the refuge system mission.

Refuge Manager:

Glen R. Miller 2/25/00
(Signature/Date)

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ANIMAL CONTROL

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to control nuisance animals by lethal hunting and trapping and when practical by nonlethal methods.

The Service has analyzed the following alternatives to the proposal in an Environmental Assessment (copy attached): No action; control by capture and relocation; control by use of toxic baits; control by reintroduction of natural predators.

The preferred alternative was selected over the other alternatives because: The other alternatives would either be detrimental to refuge objectives and the ecosystem or would not be compatible with the local community.

Implementation of the agency's decision would be expected to result in the following environmental, social, and economic effects: It would improve or keep the environment from degrading on the refuge. It would be popular with local hunters and trappers but unfavorable to a segment of the population who are opposed to any killing of animals on refuges by humans. It would have little economic effects. Some meat would be eaten and furs sold in a depressed fur market.

Measures to mitigate and/or minimize adverse effects have been incorporated into the proposal. These measures include: Adverse effects will only come if some form of animal control is not utilized.

The proposal is not expected to have any significant adverse effects on wetlands and floodplains, pursuant to Executive Orders 11990 and 11988 because: There is no destruction of wetland habitat or alternations to wetlands in this proposal.

The proposal has been thoroughly coordinated with all interested and/or affected parties. Parties contacted include: General public, State Clearinghouse, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, USDA - Animal Damage Control.

Copies of the Environmental Assessment are available by writing Wapanocca NWR, P.O. Box 279, Turrell, Arkansas 72384.

Therefore, it is my determination that the proposal does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment under the meaning of section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (as amended). As such, an environmental impact statement is not required. This determination is based on the following factors (40 CFR 1508.27).

1. Both beneficial and adverse effect have been considered and this action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. (EA pages 3-7)
2. The actions will not have a significant effect on public health and safety. (EA page 6)
3. The project will not significantly effect any unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historical or cultural resources, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas. EA (pages 5-6)
4. The effects on the quality of the human environment are not likely to be highly controversial. (EA pages 3,4,6)
5. The actions do not involve highly uncertain, unique, or unknown environmental risks to the human environment. (EA pages 5-6)
6. The actions will not establish and precedent for future actions with significant effects nor does it represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. (EA page 2)
7. There will be no cumulatively significant impacts on the environment. Cumulative impacts have been analyzed with consideration of other similar activities on adjacent lands, in past action, and in foreseeable future actions. (EA pages 5-6)
8. The actions will not significantly affect any site listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places, nor will they cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, of historic resources. (EA page 4)
9. The actions are not likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species, or their habitats. (EA page 4)

10. The actions will not lead to a violation of federal, state, or local laws imposed for the protection of the environment. (EA page 2)

References: Animal Control Plan Environmental Assessment

Judy Jones
Regional Director

5-5-00
Date

Heking